

May 17, 1983

LB 429

ask Senator Remmers if he would yield to a question. Senator Remmers, I understand your bill deals now only with nonprofit nursing homes and hospitals. Is that correct?

SENATOR REMMERS: Yes. Yes, Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Would that include then state owned and county owned nursing homes and hospitals?

SENATOR REMMERS: I would think they would fall under the nonprofit category.

SENATOR HIGGINS: And the capital construction bonds you are talking about could only be used for equipment. If this bill passes and they are going to be issuing these bonds, I don't see a whole big need for a big cash fund for our hospitals, our state owned hospitals to hold onto. In other words, as long as they have got these bonds that they can go out, as I understand it the money they spend right now they are telling me are state owned hospitals doesn't come from the taxpayers, it comes from the profit they make at the University Hospital. They call that their cash fund and it is not tax dollars. It is the money they made off the hospital so as long as they get to keep that money I don't really understand their need for these types of bonds that we are talking about. I'm interested, too, in the fact that the hospitals and the nursing homes are going to use this money to buy equipment and yet I have listened for weeks on end to arguments...thank you, Senator Remmers, arguments about how nursing homes cannot afford to train nurses aides, yet they want to go out and borrow money to build bigger and better nursing homes. I have to laugh when I think of the hospital in Omaha that built a car wash. That is capital improvements and then they had the facetiousness to tell the Omaha World Herald, "That is to attract employees." Can't you just see those \$3.35 an hour nurse's aides going to work at that hospital because they had a car wash? This is for equipment. What kind of equipment? Look at the waste that we have in the hospitals in Omaha. I don't know about the rest of the state. I know St. Joseph Hospital bought a helicopter, built a heliport, invited the other hospitals in Omaha to join them in the use of it. They refused. I have a list of all the patients that St. Jo Hospital picked up in different parts of Nebraska and Iowa and delivered them to those hospitals that refused to join with them in sharing the cost of the helicopter, a heliport. Today we have a helicopter and a heliport at the University of Nebraska Hospital and they are sharing it with other hospitals only they got around it by leasing the helicopter but